

South Bay Cities Council of Governments

Transit Operators Working Group

February 3, 2022

Meeting Notes

Attendees: Jacki Bacharach, Steve Lantz, David Leger & Amina Karwa (SBCCOG); Joyce Rooney, Leslie Scott & Diane Amaya (Beach Cities Transit); Dana Pynn (GTrans); Scott Greene (Metro); Jason Jo (Carson); Joe Linton (Streetsblog)

1. Self-Introductions & Acceptance of the January 6, 2022 Meeting Notes

The virtual meeting was called to order at 2:02 p.m. Meeting notes were accepted as presented.

2. Transit Operator Issues and Concerns Including COVID-19 Impacts

Ms. Pynn informed the group that GTrans was hit by the Omicron wave. Many employees were out leading to a workforce shortage, but the issue seems to have tapered off now that the surge is receding. GTrans is trying to hire additional drivers. They are also working to prepare for the Superbowl crowds and are hoping to have adequate staff levels by that time.

Ms. Rooney reported there was a jump in COVID cases in December and January but not enough to miss any trips. The opening of the Beach Cities transit center is to be determined, but will likely take place in Spring or early Summer. This month, Beach Cities Transit will focus on how to do outreach to transit agencies to explain the transition from the current location to the new location. They are currently working to procure other facility needs such as security and monitors.

Mr. Jo reported that Carson Circuit re-started in January with modest ridership. Mr. Jo reminded the group that Carson recently contracted with Long Beach Transit for some of the Carson Circuit routes. Long Beach Transit ridership figures were released to them as well and they were also modest, but Carson is hoping for ridership to pick up. Mr. Jo announced they have been struggling to get service from their current bus wash vendor and asked the group for any recommendations for alternate firms/services.

Mr. Greene reported Metro service has been reduced, with 10-minute frequency lines being reduced to 12-minute frequencies due to operator shortages. Metro has been improving since January when 20% of service was missing every day. With the reduction in service, Metro should be back below 10% missed service pretty soon, with a target of only 1-2% by Spring/Summer. In June they are hoping to restore the bus levels and line frequency put forth in the NextGen bus plan. The hiring effort continues but a slowdown happens during the background check process. Metro is also focused on the Superbowl and is planning a shuttle running from the Hawthorne Green Line Station. Lastly, Mr. Greene noted that Metro will have to close the Green Line down a few times this Spring to do the signal work.

3. Measure R and Measure M Updates

Mr. Lantz informed the group that SBCCOG has compiled a list of Measure R Metro Budget Requests

which are going to the Transportation Committee and Board of Directors this month. The Measure M multi-year requests are also be processed at the same time. Mr. Lantz requested the group to send them any last-minute changes this week. Measure R and Measure M Metro Budget Request Spreadsheets were distributed.

4. Updates on Metro Issues, Initiatives & Studies

-Metro Go Pass (Fareless System) Initiative:

Mr. Lantz explained to the group that fareless transit ended when Metro started to collect fares officially on January 10. Metro is still offering promotional subsidies to try to attract back riders including the low-income LIFE program that provides deep discounts. Ms. Rooney noted that the Beach Cities are still not enforcing fare collection.

-Metro "Golden Opportunity" Letter:

Mr. Lantz reported that Metro is asking all of the COGs to provide each COG's logo to them and to support their 'Golden Opportunity' Letter: they are looking for state funds to help in this recovery effort. Mr. Lantz noted the SBCCOG has already approved it and submitted an accompanying letter requesting Metro focus on providing funding for projects that were left out of those listed in the Golden Opportunity Letter.

-Green Line Mid-Life Rebuild / Improvement Project Status:

Metro staff has identified a new operating plan for the Crenshaw-LAX/Green Line. Metro staff believes they have the ability to continue to operate with two car platforms on the Green Line based on the new operating plan. The SBCCOG is going to prepare an item discussing the operating plan while still encouraging Metro to continue to seek funds to get those platform extensions built in anticipation of the Green Line being extended to Torrance, and the Crenshaw Line getting extended to Hollywood. With all the system expansion, the SBCCOG believes there is the potential for demand to exceed capacity of two car trains, and will continue asking Metro to invest in these last four platform extensions. This will bring the entire Green Line up to Metro's current standard of three car platforms/trains while also not constraining the rest of the network.

-Crenshaw Line Operating Plan:

This item was discussed above under the Green Line Mid-Life Rebuild.

Mr. Lantz noted that Metro will be electrifying the entirety of the Silver Line as opposed to only a portion of it by increasing battery capacity of Silver Line buses.

5. January 2022 Transportation Update: Item was received and filed.

6. Three Month Look-Ahead: Item was received and filed.

7. Announcements / Adjournment

The group heard the objection to removing the Zoom link from the monthly agendas and Mr. Leger confirmed he will no longer post the Zoom link on the agendas.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:34 p.m. to March 3, 2022, at 2:00 p.m.